“Turning Points” in World History

A turning point is an event, era, and/or development in world history that has brought about significant social, cultural, ecological, political or economic change.
Ancient History

- Harnessing fire
- Origins of language
- c.8000 BCE: The switch from hunter/gatherer to farmer = agricultural revolution
- c.3000 BCE: The first civilizations → invention of writing and the wheel in the Middle East.
- c.1750 BCE: Hammurabi’s Code
- c.1000 BCE: The beginning of the iron age → The use of iron for tools created a second burst of human expansion.
- c.530 BCE: Siddhartha Gautama founded Buddhism
- c.500 BCE: Democratic traditions start in Athens / beginning of Bantu Migrations
Classical Period

- 313 CE: Christianity made legal in the Roman Empire → Christianity would become 1 of the 5 major religions
- 476 CE: Fall of the Roman Empire
- 618 CE: Tang Dynasty becomes the cultural and economic hub of East Asia
- 622 CE: Islam began → Islam would become 1 of the 5 major religions
- c. 1000 CE: Development of gunpowder
Medieval Period

- 1279: Mongols conquer China
- 1347: The plague, black death $\rightarrow \frac{1}{4}$ of the European population died
- 1453: Ottoman Turks took Constantinople $\rightarrow$ changed the name to Istanbul
- 1492: Columbus landed in Hispaniola, the “New World” $\rightarrow$ Columbian Exchange
Global Connections

- 1517: Martin Luther protested against the Catholic Church → sparked the Protestant Reformation
- 1520s: Establishment of the Spanish Empire in the Americas
- 1607: Jamestown was established → the first permanent English settlement in North America
Revolutions

- c.1550-1700: The Scientific Revolution
- c.1750: The Industrial Revolution
- 1776: The American Revolution
- 1789: The French Revolution
- 1810: Mexican Independence
- 1911: The End of the Last Chinese Dynasty
The Modern Period

- 1914: World War I
- 1917: The Birth of the Soviet Union
- 1945: The Atomic Bomb
- 1947: Indian Independence
- 1980: MTV
- 1989: Fall of the Berlin Wall
- 2001: 9/11